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AUTHOR Boyer, Roscoe A.; Garza, Joseph M.
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ABSTRACT

A survey of rural life in Leflore County, Mississippi, was made so that rural youth problems could be defined in behavioral terms in an attempt to meet their needs. Data were collected in 1967-68 from 1,496 Negro heads-of-households filling out a questionnaire. The information was grouped into 5 areas: family, physical facilities, health, financial state, and education of the respondents and their households. With each area discussed, tables are presented. Major findings and general recommendations relating to the sociological factors conclude the first section of the report. The second section, reporting some educational implications of the sociological factors, recommends that (1) a system of pre-school training should be immediately instituted and (2) a parent education program is a grave necessity. This work was prepared under Title III of the Elementary and Secondary Education Act. [Not available in hard copy due to marginal legibility of original document.] (AN)

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Leflore County School District
Mississippi

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Volume I

Sociological Considerations

Roscoe A. Boyer
Joseph M. Garza

Otis W. Allen, Superintendent
Cooper W. Crain, Coordinator
Howard A. Dawson, Chief Consultant
Greenwood, Mississippi 38930
January, 1969

PC004359

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Some Sociological Factors Related to Education in Leflore County

By

Roscoe A. Boyer,
Professor of Education
School of Education
University of Mississippi

LEFLORE COUNTY SCHOOL CENSUS
PREPARED BY THE UNIVERSITY OF MISSISSIPPI

TOTAL RESPONSES = 1496

1. MONTH IN WHICH THE SURVEY WAS ADMINISTERED

386	JANUARY
1	FEBRUARY
0	MARCH
0	APRIL
0	MAY
0	JUNE
0	JULY
0	AUGUST
0	SEPTEMBER
3	OCTOBER
1	NOVEMBER
1102	DECEMBER

2. YEAR IN WHICH THE SURVEY WAS ADMINISTERED

1118	1967
378	1968

3. SCHOOL IN WHICH THE SURVEY WAS ADMINISTERED

2	3.
180	SAM BALKIN
0	EAST ELEMENTARY
358	AMANDA ELZY
166	T. Y. FLEMING
0	LEFLORE COUNTY HIGH
361	L. S. ROGERS
241	R. B. SCHLATER
0	SUNNYSIDE
187	WILKES

4. COUNTY IN WHICH THE SURVEY WAS ADMINISTERED

1493	LEFLORE

5. STATE IN WHICH THE SURVEY WAS ADMINISTERED

1492	MISSISSIPPI

6. RACE OF THE RESPONDENT

0	CHINESE
0	INDIAN
1494	NEGRO
0	WHITE

7. SEX OF THE HEAD OF THE HOUSEHOLD

1175	MALE
316	FEMALE

8. AGE OF THE HEAD OF THE HOUSEHOLD

11	AGE 19 AND UNDER
236	AGE 20 TO 29
299	AGE 30 TO 39
385	AGE 40 TO 49
324	AGE 50 TO 59
147	AGE 60 TO 69
74	AGE 70 AND OVER

9. AGE OF THE RESPONDENT AT MARRIAGE

13	AGE 14 OR UNDER
428	AGE 15 TO 19
393	AGE 20 TO 24
114	AGE 25 TO 29
36	AGE 30 TO 34
17	AGE 35 TO 39
16	AGE 40 OR OVER
430	NOT INDICATED

10. AGE AT WHICH THE RESPONDENT LEFT SCHOOL

1	1.
0	SIX
4	SEVEN
9	EIGHT
9	NINE
29	TEN
14	ELEVEN
37	TWELVE
46	THIRTEEN
91	FOURTEEN
131	FIFTEEN
161	SIXTEEN
180	SEVENTEEN
151	EIGHTEEN
80	NINETEEN
26	TWENTY
13	TWENTY'ONE
7	TWENTY'TWO
2	TWENTY'THREE
3	TWENTY'FOUR
1	TWENTY'FIVE
3	27.
498	NEVER ATTENDED

11. LAST SCHOOL GRADE COMPLETED BY THE RESPONDENT

74	FIRST
94	SECOND
174	THIRD

130		FIFTH
177		SIXTH
121		SEVENTH
121		EIGHTH
70		NINTH
45		TENTH
19		ELEVENTH
42		TWELFTH
5		FIRST YEAR OF COLLEGE
4		SECOND YEAR OF COLLEGE
0		THIRD YEAR OF COLLEGE
20		FOURTH YEAR OF COLLEGE
6	17.	
1	18.	
183		COMPLETED NONE

12. NUMBER IN THE HOUSEHOLD 60 YEARS OR OLDER

95	ONE
12	TWO
0	THREE
0	FOUR
0	FIVE
1	SIX
0	SEVEN
0	EIGHT
0	NINE
1388	NONE

13. NUMBER IN THE HOUSEHOLD BETWEEN 40 AND 59 YEARS

511	ONE
61	TWO
2	THREE
2	FOUR
0	FIVE
0	SIX
0	SEVEN
0	EIGHT
0	NINE
920	NONE

14. NUMBER IN THE HOUSEHOLD BETWEEN 17 AND 39 YEARS

702	ONE
252	TWO
98	THREE
34	FOUR
15	FIVE
6	SIX
6	SEVEN
3	EIGHT
0	NINE
0	TEN
0	ELEVEN
0	TWELVE
0	THIRTEEN

0	FOURTEEN
380	NONE

15. NUMBER IN THE HOUSEHOLD BETWEEN 6 AND 16

299	ONE
209	TWO
202	THREE
187	FOUR
193	FIVE
102	SIX
51	SEVEN
20	EIGHT
7	NINE
0	TEN
0	ELEVEN
0	TWELVE
0	THIRTEEN
0	FOURTEEN
0	FIFTEEN
0	SIXTEEN
0	SEVENTEEN
0	EIGHTEEN
0	NINETEEN
226	NONE

16. NUMBER IN THE HOUSEHOLD 5 YEARS OR YOUNGER

285	ONE
290	TWO
223	THREE
66	FOUR
23	FIVE
6	SIX
1	SEVEN
0	EIGHT
0	NINE
0	TEN
0	ELEVEN
0	TWELVE
1	THIRTEEN
0	FOURTEEN
601	NONE

17. NUMBER OF MEMBERS LIVING AWAY IN STATE

188	ONE
94	TWO
41	THREE
24	FOUR
11	FIVE
5	SIX
0	SEVEN
0	EIGHT
1	NINE
0	TEN
0	ELEVEN
0	TWELVE

0	THIRTEEN
0	FOURTEEN
1132	NONE

18. NUMBER OF MEMBERS LIVING AWAY OUT OF STATE

201	ONE
132	TWO
72	THREE
59	FOUR
41	FIVE
26	SIX
11	SEVEN
8	EIGHT
7	NINE
2	TEN
0	ELEVEN
0	TWELVE
0	THIRTEEN
0	FOURTEEN
937	NONE

19. SUPPORT GIVEN OR RECEIVED BY THE FAMILY

50	FAMILY RECEIVES SUPPORT
13	FAMILY GIVES SUPPORT
646	NEITHER
32	NOT INDICATED

20. CHURCH DENOMINATION OF THE HEAD OF THE HOUSEHOLD

1223	BAPTIST
49	CHURCH OF GOD
99	METHODIST
1	CATHOLIC
105	NONE
1	6.
1	7.

21. AGE OF THE HOUSE

178	UNDER 10 YEARS
499	10 TO 24 YEARS
605	25 TO 49 YEARS
197	50 YEARS OR OVER
6	NOT INDICATED

22. SITE OF THE HOUSE IN RELATIONSHIP TO BARNS AND PENS

608	BARNS AND PENS LESS THAN 100 FEET FROM THE HOUSE
355	MORE THAN 100 FEET FROM THE HOUSE

23. NUMBER OF ROOMS IN THE HOUSE IN USE

1	ONE

62	TWO
341	THREE
580	FOUR
279	FIVE
148	SIX
56	SEVEN
22	EIGHT
4	NINE
1	TEN

24. TOTAL NUMBER OF ROOMS IN THE HOUSE

1	ONE
61	TWO
336	THREE
582	FOUR
278	FIVE
149	SIX
56	SEVEN
24	EIGHT
4	NINE
1	TEN

25. TYPE OF HEATING USED IN THE HOUSE

152	FIREPLACE
84	KITCHEN RANGE
545	WOOD OR COAL STOVE
67	WOOD OR COAL CIRCULATOR
614	GAS OR OIL CIRCULATOR
22	FURNACE

26. TYPE OF LIGHTING USED IN THE HOUSE

16	CANDLES
17	KEROSENE
6	MANTLE OR PRESSURE LAMPS
1456	ELECTRIC

27. TYPE OF COOKING FACILITY USED IN THE HOUSE

8	FIREPLACE
58	MAKESHIFT STOVE
273	WOOD OR COAL RANGE
107	OIL OR GASOLINE RANGE
1044	GAS OR ELECTRIC RANGE

28. TYPE OF REFRIGERATION USED IN THE HOUSE

179	NONE
1	CELLER
92	ICE
1210	MECHANICAL

29. TYPE OF HOUSEHOLD SEWAGE DISPOSAL SYSTEM

603	NONE
362	CESSPOOL OR SEPTIC TANK
508	PRIVY

30. AGE OF THE RESPONDENT WHEN FIRST CHILD BORN

173	15 AND UNDER
498	16 TO 17
363	18 TO 19
311	20 TO 25
81	OVER 25

31. IS THE MEDICAL CARE RECEIVED BY THE FAMILY ADEQUATE

587	YES
882	NO

32. DOES THE FAMILY HAVE A FAMILY DENTIST

467	YES
1010	NO

33. HAVE THE CHILDREN OF THE RESPONDENT EVER BEEN TO A DENTIST

766	YES
713	NO

34. DOES THE CHILD OF THE RESPONDENT HAVE A TOOTHBRUSH

1295	YES
178	NO

35. FREQUENCY WITH WHICH THE CHILDREN OF THE RESPONDENT SEE A DOCTOR

34	NEVER
78	ONCE A YEAR
134	REGULARLY
1241	ONLY WHEN VERY SICK

36. ILLNESSES OR DISEASES WHICH OCCUR FREQUENTLY IN THE CHILDREN OF THE RESPONDENT

1094	COLDS
249	SORES
130	RINGWORMS
47	IMPETAGO

37. NUMBER OF INFANT DEATHS WHICH HAVE OCCURED IN THE FAMILY

226	ONE
129	TWO
44	THREE

24		FOUR
15		FIVE
8		SIX
3		SEVEN
1		EIGHT
0		NINE
1	11.	
1044		NONE

38. CAUSES OF THE INFANT DEATHS

31	POSTNATAL ASPHYXIA AND ATELECTASIS
50	INFLUENZA AND PNEUMONIA
27	CONGENITAL MALFORMATION
30	BIRTH INJURIES
18	GASTRITIS, DUODENTIS, ENTERITIS AND COLITIS
31	ACCIDENT
370	OTHER

39. SHOTS RECEIVED BY MEMBERS OF THE FAMILY WITHIN THE PAST THREE YEARS

1197	POLIO
560	FLU
938	TETANUS
1103	SMALLPOX
1094	DIPTHERIA
926	TYPHOID
794	MEASLES
676	TUBERCULOSIS X'RAY

40. FREQUENCY WITH WHICH THE CHILDREN OF THE RESPONDENT BATHE

1120	EVERY DAY
306	EVERY WEEK
15	EVERY TWO WEEKS
38	DO NOT KNOW

41. IS THE RESPONDENT ABLE TO READ AND WRITE

1282	YES
193	NO

42. IS THE MATE OF THE RESPONDENT ABLE TO READ AND WRITE

1004	YES
242	NO

43. NUMBER OF BOOKS THE RESPONDENT READS IN A YEAR

551	NONE
754	1 TO 5
140	6 TO 10
30	11 TO 15
11	MORE THAN 15

83	POUR
737	AVERAGE
446	GOOD
31	EXCELLENT

45. AMOUNT OF TIME THE CHILDREN OF THE RESPONDENT DEVOTE TO HOMEWORK EACH NIGHT

57	NONE
366	LESS THAN 1 HOUR
664	1 TO 2 HOUR
148	OVER TWO HOURS
59	DO NOT KNOW

46. DOES THE RESPONDENT HELP HIS CHILDREN WITH THEIR LESSONS

860	YES
428	NO

47. WILL THE RESPONDENT ENCOURAGE HIS CHILDREN TO FINISH HIGH SCHOOL

1471	YES
9	NO

48. MEANS BY WHICH THE CHILDREN OF THE RESPONDENT GO TO SCHOOL

40	WALK
1232	RIDE A BUS
16	TAKEN BY SOMEONE

49. NUMBER OF THE CHILDREN OF THE RESPONDENT WHO ARE OF SCHOOL AGE YET ARE NOT IN SCHOOL

88	ONE
21	TWO
3	THREE
1	FOUR
1	FIVE
1	SIX
0	SEVEN
0	EIGHT
0	NINE
0	TEN
0	ELEVEN
0	TWELVE
0	THIRTEEN
0	FOURTEEN
1372	NONE

50. TYPES OF LITERATURE WHICH THE CHILDREN OF THE RESPONDENT RECEIVE AT HOME

453	NONE

443	COMICS
660	MAGAZINES
370	NEWSPAPERS
451	BOOKS

51. DO THE CHILDREN OF THE RESPONDENT RECEIVE HELP IN THEIR HOMEWORK FROM SOMEONE ELSE

282	YES
722	NO
289	SOMETIMES

52. TYPES OF ENTERTAINMENT WHICH THE CHILDREN OF THE RESPONDENT RECEIVE AT HOME

1285	TELEVISION
1050	RADIO
405	GAMES
131	OTHER

53. HAVE THE CHILDREN OF THE RESPONDENT EVER BEEN TAKEN TO A ZOO

412	YES
1047	NO

54. HAVE THE CHILDREN OF THE RESPONDENT EVER BEEN TAKEN TO A MUSEUM

97	YES
1360	NO

55. DOES THE RESPONDENT HAVE A JOB

699	YES
785	NO

56. LENGTH OF TIME THE RESPONDENT HAS WORKED AT HIS PRESENT JOB

117	UNDER SIX MONTHS
81	SIX MONTHS TO A YEAR
182	ONE TO THREE YEARS
302	FIVE TO TEN YEARS
56	NOT INDICATED

57. LENGTH OF TIME THE RESPONDENT HAS BEEN OUT OF WORK, IF UNEMPLOYED

219	UNDER SIX MONTHS
159	SIX MONTHS TO A YEAR
371	OVER A YEAR

58. THE LONGEST TIME THE RESPONDENT HAS HELD A JOB

212	UNDER A YEAR
306	ONE TO THREE YEARS

239	THREE TO FIVE YEARS
221	FIVE TO TEN YEARS
478	OVER TEN YEARS

59. NUMBER OF MEALS A DAY WHICH THE FAMILY EATS

619	ALWAYS THREE
265	ALMOST ALWAYS THREE
570	GENERALLY TWO
28	LESS THAN TWO

60. DO THE CHILDREN OF THE RESPONDENT HAVE BREAKFAST BEFORE LEAVING FOR SCHOOL

1017	YES
269	NO

61. DO THE CHILDREN EAT IN THE SCHOOL CAFETERIA OR TAKE THEIR LUNCH TO SCHOOL

994	EAT IN THE CAFETERIA
168	TAKE THEIR LUNCH
87	NEITHER

62. IF THE CHILDREN EAT IN THE CAFETERIA DO THEY PAY FOR THEIR MEAL OR RECEIVE IT FREE

796	PAY FOR THE MEAL
95	RECEIVE IT FREE
152	SOME PAY AND SOME RECEIVE IT FREE

63. DOES THE RESPONDENT RECEIVE AID THROUGH THE FEDERAL FOOD STAMP PROGRAM

830	YES
619	NO

64. HAS THE RESPONDENT EVER WORKED OUTSIDE THE STATE

246	YES
1236	NO

65. DOES THE RESPONDENT OR HIS MATE ATTEND A TRAING CENTER OF ANY TYPE

87	YES
1383	NO

66. TYPE OF CENTER ATTENDED BY THE RESPONDENT OR MATE

62	ADULT EDUCATIONAL PROGRAM
30	M.D.T.A.
1	STAR

67. DOES THE RESPONDENT OR MATE HAVE A SKILL WHICH COULD BE DEVELOPED BY RECEIVING MORE TRAINING

454	YES
1014	NO

68. TYPE OF SKILL WHICH COULD BE DEVELOPED BY TRAINING

156	SEWING
47	COOKING
33	NURSING
10	RESEARCH
94	BUILDING TRADES
2	PHYSICAL THERAPIST
83	MECHANIC
7	BEAUTICIAN
25	MACHINERY

69. WOULD THE RESPONDENT OR MATE BE WILLING TO ATTEND A TRAINING SCHOOL

465	YES
71	NO

70. THE SOURCE OF THE HOME WATER SUPPLY

462	HAND PUMP
96	ELECTRIC PUMP
52	SHALLOW WELL
131	DEEP WELL
334	OUTSIDE FAUCET
251	INSIDE FAUCET
4	RAIN BARREL
49	NO WATER ON PREMISES
111	HAUL WATER IN BARRELS

71. DOES THE HOUSE HAVE INSIDE PLUMBING

356	YES
1127	NO

72. INTERIOR PLUMBING FACILITIES OF THE HOUSE

265	BATHTUB
311	COMMODE
229	LAVATORY

73. HOUSING STATUS OF THE FAMILY

165	OWNS THEIR HOUSE
331	RENTS THE HOUSE
977	NEITHER

74. RENT PAID PER MONTH BY THE RESPONDENT IF HE RENTS

1158	0 TO $19
83	$20 TO $29
16	$30 TO $39
16	$40 TO $49
7	$50 AND OVER
131	NOT INDICATED

75. IS THE RESPUNDENT REGISTERED TO VOTE

832	YES
643	NO

76. HAS THE RESPONDENT EVER VOTED

698	YES
773	NO

77. NUMBER OF CHILDREN IN THE FAMILY WHO ATTEND HEADSTART PROGRAMS

288	ONE
134	TWO
25	THREE
3	FOUR
0	FIVE
0	SIX
0	SEVEN
0	EIGHT
0	NINE
1036	NONE

This survey report was based on data gathered through the calendar years 1967-1968 in Leflore County, Mississippi, and presents information secured from 1,496 Negro respondents of Leflore County. The schools which children of the respondents attended were Sam Balkin, Amanda Elzy, T. Y. Fleming, L. S. Rogers, R. B. Schlater, and Wilkes.

The survey team was composed of 60 Leflore County classroom teachers, many of whom have been residents of the community for several years and were well acquainted with the families interviewed. The teachers were divided into two-person teams, one asking the questions and the other recording the answers, and assigned according to bus routes by attendance center. The interviews were conducted following the school day and on week ends. Each team was paid five dollars for each completed questionnaire. No reimbursement was granted for travel or meals.

The items on the questionnaire were prepared by three members of the Sociology Department, University of Mississippi, the Title III Staff of the Leflore County School District and committees of teachers representing all attendance centers. The items were mimeographed on legal size paper. Following the interview the data were recorded on coding sheets and sent to the data processing center at the University of Mississippi. The computer output is given in Appendix A and includes the questionnaire items.

To facilitate handling of the data, the census information was grouped into five areas: family, physical facilities, health, financial, and education of the respondents and their households.

A. Family:

The sex of the respondents qualifying as "head of the household" was 1,175 males and 316 females. Table I of this census shows the age and number of the individual respondents cited as head of the household.

Table I shows that eleven of the households responding have heads of household that are only nineteen years old or less. This figure represents

TABLE I

AGE OF THE HEAD OF THE HOUSEHOLD

Age	Number of respondents	Per cent of respondents
19 or under	11	1
20 to 29	236	16
30 to 39	299	20
40 to 49	385	26
50 to 59	324	22
60 to 69	147	10
70 or over	74	5
Not indicated	20	1
TOTAL	1496	100

less than one per cent of responding households; however, it does not appear to be significant when the responsibilities usually befalling the head of the household are taken into consideration. The age span of twenty to sixty years constitutes the age group for eighty-three per cent of the heads of households; this includes 1,244 of the respondents. The forty to sixty age group, including 709 respondents, constitutes approximately fifty per cent of the heads of household. Table I further indicates that at least fourteen per cent of the households are headed by probable grandparents as the age group of from sixty to over seventy years of age constitutes 211 heads of household.

The actual numbers of household members and their respective age groups are shown in Table II of this study. The age group data represents pre-school age, normal school age, optimum child-bearing age, marginal child-bearing age, and those sixty years of age and older.

The total view of the population is not ascertained by noting the number and ages of household members residing with the family. It is also significant to note the number of respondents reporting members of the family that live away from the household. Also to be noted is that there are 894 households having a total of 1,946 pre-school children. Stated in another way, more than half the homes in Leflore County have pre-school children. This fact is to be kept in mind as one proceeds through this document and learns how void and pathetic their homes really are.

Tables III and IV indicate the households which reported members living away from the household in the State of Mississippi and those members living outside the State of Mississippi.

Table III shows that 188 respondents, thirteen per cent reported having one member of the family living in the state away from the household, but ninety-four respondents reported two members of the household living elsewhere

TABLE II

NUMBER AND AGE OF PERSONS IN HOUSEHOLD

Number in household	0-5	6-16	17-39	40-59	60 and over
1	285	299	702	511	95
2	290	209	252	61	12
3	223	202	98	2	
4	66	187	34	2	
5	23	193	15		
6	6	102	6		1
7	1	51	6		
8	0	20	3		
9 and over	1	7			

TABLE III

FAMILY MEMBERS LIVING AWAY FROM HOUSEHOLD IN STATE

Number of family members	Families Reporting	Number of persons
1	188	188
2	94	188
3	41	123
4	24	96
5	11	55
6	5	30
7	0	0
8	0	0
9	1	9
10	0	0
TOTALS	364	689

in the state. The respondents reporting three or more household members living elsewhere in Mississippi do not represent a high percentage with 304 members. A total of 364 respondents, twenty-four per cent reported 689 household members living away from the household in the state.

Table IV is concerned with reported household members that live away from the reporting household outside the State of Mississippi. Data relative to the specific out-of-state location of these household members is not available at this time; only the factors of their absence from the household and the state are presented.

Table IV shows that 201 respondents (thirteen per cent) with one household member living away from the household and outside the state. One hundred and thirty-two persons (nine per cent) reported two household members residing out of state while three members of household living out of state were indicated by seventy-two persons (five per cent). A total of 559 reported having household members living out of the state at the time of the census or a total of 1,502 absent from the family both in and out of state. Fifty-four of these reporting 559 households reported six or more household members residing out of the state.

A comparison of the data in Tables III and IV is significant in that it yields some useful information relative to the intrastate and interstate migration of the Mississippi Negro population. Tables III and IV show that a total of 913 households (sixty-one per cent of the respondents) have a total of 2,191 household members residing away from the household. There are more than two times as many living out of state as there are those who have remained within the state. Nine times as many families reported having six or more household members residing out of the state as families reporting the same number of members living away from the household but within the state. A total of 195 more families reported members out of state than those that

TABLE IV

FAMILY MEMBERS LIVING AWAY FROM HOUSEHOLD OUT OF STATE

Number of family members	Families reporting	Number of persons
1	201	201
2	132	264
3	72	216
4	59	236
5	41	205
6	26	156
7	11	77
8	8	64
9	7	63
10	2	20
TOTALS	559	1502

reported members within the state and there were reported to be 813 more household members living out of state than those reported to be living away from the home but within the state.

Table V is related to the religious or denominational preference of the head of the household. The vast majority of those replying showed a preference for the Protestant faith. The largest number of these favored the Baptist Church. Discounting the respondents that did not reply to this specific question, a rather significant number (105) indicated no religious preference for the head of the household. This could be construed to mean that either no one church was consistently attended or that the head of the household did not adhere to any religion.

The age of the respondent at the time of first marriage is shown in Table VI of this report. The age groups range from fourteen years of age and under to over forty years of age.

Three groups of figures in Table VI appear to be significant. The age group of 15 to 19 reported twenty-nine per cent of the marriages and the group of 20 to 24 constituted twenty-six per cent. The first group, 15 to 19, appear to be large in proportion to marriages of the general population but the per cent of marriages for the 20 to 24 age group appears consistent with the national trend today. When they are combined, the two groups represented fifty-five per cent. The third area appearing significant is the large number of thirty-two per cent that did not give this information about marriage age. It may be inferred that a large number of the respondents either did not know their age at the time of marriage or the respondent did not want this information known for various reasons. It may also be inferred that no official marriage ceremony had taken place.

The age of the respondent at the birth of the first child is shown in Table VII. Which also shows the number and per cent of the respondents per

TABLE V

CHURCH DENOMINATION OF THE HEAD OF THE HOUSEHOLD

Denomination	Number	Per cent
Baptist	1223	81
Methodist	99	7
Church of God	49	3
Catholic	1	0
None	105	7
Not Indicated	19	1
TOTAL	1496	100

TABLE VI

AGE OF THE RESPONDENTS AT MARRIAGE

Age	Number of respondents	Per cent
14 or under	13	1
15 to 19	428	29
20 to 24	393	26
25 to 29	114	8
30 to 34	36	2
35 to 39	17	1
40 or over	16	1
Not indicated	479	32
TOTAL	1496	100

age group. Table VII indicated that over three-fourths gave birth between the ages 16 to 25 to their first child. The age group of 16 to 17 was the singularly most out-standing group as to the greatest number of births. This group reported 498 children or thirty-three per cent.

The voting status of the respondents is indicated in Table VIII. Table VIII indicates that fifty-six per cent of the respondents had registered to vote but only forty-seven per cent had ever voted. Forty-three per cent of the respondents advised that they had not registered; fifty-two per cent indicated that they had never voted.

B. Physical Facilities:

Included in the survey were items relating to the houses in which the people live in rural Leflore County. The descriptive data of the residences are given in Tables IX through XVIII. Because there are no current data for comparable communities (the 1960 U.S. census did not differentiate between urban and rural homes), there data will be evaluated on the bases of internal criteria.

The age of a rural house was included in the survey since it was believed that such data might indicate population stability within the community. Table IX gives the frequency distribution of the ages of the houses. Of the 1,496 homes, there are approximately as many houses less than ten years old as there are over fifty years and almost half the residences, forty-six per cent, have been constructed within the last twenty-five years.

Most studies show that those children having home environments which are conducive to favorable study conditions tend to attain higher achievement level than children from homes that tend to be overcrowded. It therefore follows that in order to construct a plan for up-grading the achievement level of the rural children, some assessment should be made of the variables associated with home study conditions. In Table X a frequency distribution is presented of the

TABLE VII

AGE OF THE RESPONDENT WHEN FIRST CHILD BORN

Age	Number	Per cent
15 and under	173	12
16 to 17	498	33
18 to 19	363	24
20 to 25	311	21
Over 25	81	5
Not indicated	70	5
TOTAL	1496	100

TABLE VIII

VOTING STATUS OF RESPONDENTS

	Yes	Per cent	No	Per cent
Registered to vote	832	56	643	43
Have ever voted	698	47	773	52

TABLE IX

AGE OF THE HOUSE

Age	Number of houses	Per cent
Under 10	178	12
10 to 24	499	34
25 to 49	605	41
50 and over	197	14
Not indicated	17	1
TOTAL	1496	100

TABLE X

UTILIZATION OF HOUSE SPACE

Room in house in use		Rooms in house
1	1	1
2	62	61
3	341	336
4	580	582
5	278	278
6	148	149
7	56	56
8	22	24
9	4	4
10	1	1
TOTAL	1493	1492

TABLE XI

TYPE OF HEATING USED IN THE HOUSE

Type of heat	Number	Per cent
Gas or oil circulator	614	41
Wood or coal stove	545	37
Fireplace	152	10
Kitchen range	84	6
Wood or coal circulator	67	5
Furnace	22	2
Not indicated	12	1
TOTAL	1496	100

TABLE XII

TYPE OF LIGHTING USED IN HOUSE

Type of lighting	Number	Per cent
Electric	1457	97
Kerosene	17	1
Candles	16	1
Mantle or pressure lamps	6	1
TOTAL	1496	100

TABLE XIII

TYPE OF COOKING FACILITY USED IN THE HOUSE

Type of cooking facility	Number	Per cent
Gas or electric range	1044	70
Wood or coal range	273	18
Oil or gasoline range	107	7
Makeshift stove	58	4
Fireplace	8	1
Not indicated	6	1
TOTAL	1496	100

number of rooms per home and of the 1,493 homes 994, seventy per cent, had one, two, three or four rooms in use. When these data are compared with the population living in these homes, there are approximately three persons living in each room in the community. Such conditions preclude the availability of any home study arrangements.

Tables XI, XII, and XIII, present the information as to incidence of modern facilities in the homes of the children in Leflore County. Again the degree of poverty is shocking when one learning that one house in ten is heated by a fireplace and thirty-nine houses, having no electricity, are illuminated by an oil lamp or by candles.

C. Health:

The physical health of the community may be due in part to the ability of the citizens to preserve foods, wash, bathe and remove wastes. Data relating to these factors are presented in Tables XIV through XVII. From these tables one learns that one home in five has no refrigeration, almost half the homes have no toilet of any type. Septic tanks were reported to be found in one home in four. When one adds these conditions to the source of water used by these rural people; it becomes evident that most all the water is probably contaminated and also scarce. Thus the children from these homes are likely to be dirty, ill, and not socially accepted.

In order to estimate the likelihood of the residents improving the home conditions relating to school achievement, the ownership of the homes was included in the survey. A person not familiar with rural poverty may have difficulty in understanding the implications of the data on housing status given in Table XVIII. These data indicate that 1000 homes in 1,496 are neither owned nor rented. In other words, these people are living in dwellings for which no one is responsible. This condition may explain why so many houses are without water.

TABLE XIV

TYPE OF REFRIGERATION USED IN THE HOUSE

Type of refrigeration	Number	Per cent
Mechanical	1210	82
None	179	12
Ice	92	6
Celler	1	1
Not indicated	14	1
TOTAL	1496	100

TABLE XV

TYPE OF HOUSEHOLD DISPOSAL SYSTEM

Type of disposal system	Number	Per cent
Privy (outside)	508	34
Cesspool or septic tank	362	24
None	603	40
Not indicated	23	2
TOTAL	1496	100

TABLE XVI

SOURCE OF HOME WATER SUPPLY

Source of supply	Number	Per cent
Handpump	462	31
Outside faucet	334	22
Inside faucet	251	17
Deep well	131	9
Haul water in barrels	111	7
Electric pump	96	6
Shallow well	52	3
Rain barrel	4	1
No water on premises	49	3
Not indicated	6	1
TOTAL	1496	100

TABLE XVII

INTERIOR PLUMBING FACILITIES OF THE HOUSE

Type plumbing	Number	Per cent
Commode	311	20
Bathtub	265	18
Lavatory	229	15
Not indicated	691	46
TOTAL	1496	100

TABLE XVIII

HOUSING STATUS OF THE FAMILY

Housing status	Number	Per cent
Rents house	331	22
Own house	165	11
Neither	977	66
Not indicated	23	1
TOTAL	1496	100

Conditions relating to health are given in Tables XIX through XXIII. These data are based on the opinion and recall of the respondents. In the columns indicating negative estimates, approximately half of the residents are not receiving "adequate" medical and dental services. The mortality of infants in the South has been well documented and the data in Table XXI simply adds to the unfortunate conditions that plagues poverty rural people. Among the families interviewed, thirty per cent have had at least one infant death. The extent of infant death is emphasized by the fact that one family in six had had two or more infants to die.

The extent of immunization among the rural people was surveyed and these data are given in Table XXII. Since these data are based on recall and thus have not been validated, they should be interpreted as indicating the rural citizens conceptions of their immunizations. The local county health department readily has provided shots for all citizens over the last several years even to the extent of seeking out both children and adults for administering shots.

The frequency with which people bathe is given in Table XXIII. The data indicate that these rural people bathe frequently, that is, seventy-five per cent have a daily bath. When one considers that only eighteen per cent have a bathtub or shower, see Table XVII, one might question the validity of both sets of data. On the other hand, the definition of bath may have a different meaning to rural persons than the modern urban definition.

D. Financial:

Included in the survey were items designed to describe the financial support being received by the rural residents of Leflore County. In many cases the results were confusing because of the large numbers of person who marked "Neither" and did not mark any item. Data in Table XXIV is one instance when unusable data were obtained and it is being included to show future research

TABLE XIX

FAMILY MEDICAL AND DENTAL APPRAISAL

Type of care	Yes		No		Not indicated	
	Number	Per cent	Number	Per cent	Number	Per cent
Adequate medical care?	587	39	882	59	27	2
Family dentist?	467	31	1010	67	19	1
Dental visits by children?	766	51	713	47	17	1
Toothbrush owned by child?	1295	87	178	12	23	1

TABLE XX

ILLNESSES OR DISEASES WHICH OCCUR FREQUENTLY IN THE CHILDREN OF THE RESPONDENT

Type illness or disease	Number	Per cent
Colds	1094	72
Sores	249	16
Ringworms	130	9
Impetago	47	3
TOTAL	1520 *	100

* Total was based on number diseases or illnesses reported rather than number of actual respondents.

TABLE XXI

NUMBER OF INFANT DEATHS WHICH HAVE OCCURED IN THE FAMILY

Number of deaths	Number of families reporting	Per cent
0	1044	70
1	226	15
2	129	9
3	44	3
4	24	2
5	15	1
6	8	1
7	3	1
TOTAL	1493	100

TABLE XXII

SHOTS RECEIVED BY MEMBERS OF THE FAMILY
IN PAST THREE YEARS

Type shot	Number of family members	Per cent
Polio	1197	16
Smallpox	1103	15
Diptheria	1094	15
Tetanus	938	13
Typhoid	926	13
Measles	794	11
Tuberculosis X-ray	676	9
Influenza	560	8
TOTAL	7288 *	100

* Total based on total number of shots received by family members rather than on actual number of respondents.

TABLE XXIII

FREQUENCY WITH WHICH THE CHILDREN OF THE RESPONDENT BATHE

Bathing frequency	Number	Per cent
Daily	1120	* 75
Weekly	306	20
Every two weeks	15	1
Do not know	38	3
Not indicated	17	1
TOTAL	1496	100

* Seventy-five per cent appears high and inconsistent with other data on plumbing and available water supply. This could be based on a definition of "bath".

workers some of the problems that are encountered when working with indigenous rural people. Attention is also directed to data in Table XXV and Table XXVI. where 814 and 747 persons respectively gave an answer to the length of time the head of the household had worked at the present job. On the other hand, these data may be valid because the head of the households may be women who do not work and live in the houses that no one owns. (Table XXVIII indicates that 1,158 heads-of-households pay little rent, if any). These data suggest that these may be a large phantom society in the rural South.

E. Education:

The descriptions of variables relating to the educational level of the rural community are given in Tables XXIX through XXXIX. As one examines these data it is to be recalled that the respondent is the recognized head of the household and quite possibly serves as the "model" for the other members. Furthermore, inconsistencies arise as in Tables XXIX and XXX in which 498 heads of household stated they have never attended school and then in the very next item 183 responded that they had attended no grade. These conditions again point out the hazards of securing data from people living in poverty. But if one takes these responses at their face value, there is a great number of wholly uneducated heads of household in Leflore County. When one adds the data given in Table XXXI that 551 homes have no book of any kind, to the fact that 498 heads-of-household reported never attending school, it may be valid to conclude that approximately one third of the homes in Leflore County can offer nothing to the educational welfare of its members. At the same time, only 83 of 1,496 respondents report their children receive poor grades (Table XXXIII).

The intentions of the heads-of-households are excellent as indicated by the data given in Tables XXXIII and XXXIV. School homework is being accomplished and even encouraged throughout the community in a majority of the homes.

TABLE XXIV

OUTSIDE SUPPORT GIVEN OR RECEIVED BY THE FAMILY

Nature of support	Number	Per cent
Received by family	50	3
Given by family	13	1
Neither	646	43
Not indicated	787	53
TOTAL	1496	100

TABLE XXV

LENGTH OF TIME RESPONDENT WORKED AT PRESENT JOB

Time	Number	Per cent
Under six months	117	8
Six months to one year	81	5
One to three years	182	12
Five to ten years	302	20
Not indicated	814	54
TOTAL	1496	100

TABLE XXVI

LENGTH OF TIME RESPONDENT HAS BEEN OUT OF WORK, IF UNEMPLOYED

Time	Number	Per cent
Under six months	219	14
Six months to a year	159	10
Over a year	371	26
Not indicated	747	* 50
TOTAL	1496	100

* This percentage appears to be closely related to the number of respondents reporting work in Table XXV.

TABLE XXVII

LONGEST TIME RESPONDENT HAS HELD A JOB

Number of years	Number	Per cent
Less than 1 year	212	14
1 to 3	306	20
3 to 5	239	16
5 to 10	221	15
Over 10 years	478	32
Not indicated	40	3
TOTAL	1496	100

TABLE XXVIII

AMOUNT OF MONTHLY RENTAL PAID BY RESPONDENTS WHO RENT THEIR HOMES

Amount paid per month	Number	Per cent
0 to $19	1158	77
$20 to $29	83	6
$30 to $39	16	1
$40 to $49	16	1
$50 and over	7	1
Not indicated	216	* 14
TOTAL	1496	100

* This figure is apparently in agreement with data in Table XVIII about the status of the home.

TABLE XXIX

AGE AT WHICH RESPONDENT LEFT SCHOOL

Age	Number of Respondents	Per cent
7	4	1
8	9	1
9	9	1
10	29	2
11	14	1
12	37	2
13	46	3
14	91	6
15	131	9
16	161	11
17	180	12
18	151	10
19	80	5
20	26	2
21	13	1
22	7	1
23	2	1
24	3	1
25	1	1
Never attended	498	33
TOTAL	1496	100

TABLE XXX

LAST SCHOOL GRADE COMPLETED BY RESPONDENT

Grade	Number	Per cent
0	183	12
1	74	5
2	94	6
3	174	12
4	205	14
5	130	9
6	177	12
7	121	8
8	121	8
9	70	5
10	45	3
11	19	1
12	42	3
First year college	5	1
Second year college	4	1
Third year college	0	0
Fourth year college	20	1
Not indicated	12	1
TOTAL	1496	100

TABLE XXXI

NUMBER OF BOOKS RESPONDENT READS IN ONE YEAR

Number of books	Number of respondents	Per cent
None	551	37
1 to 5	754	50
6 to 10	140	9
11 to 15	30	2
More than 15	11	1
Not indicated	10	1
TOTAL	1496	100

TABLE XXXII

SCHOOL GRADES ACHIEVED BY CHILDREN OF RESPONDENT

School grades	Number	Per cent
Poor	83	6
Average	737	49
Good	446	30
Excellent	31	2
Not indicated	199	13
TOTAL	1496	100

TABLE XXXIII

AMOUNT OF TIME CHILDREN OF RESPONDENT DEVOTE TO HOMEWORK EACH NIGHT

Time	Number	Per cent
None	57	4
Less than 1 hour	366	24
1 to 2 hours	664	45
Over 2 hours	148	10
Do not know	59	4
Not indicated	202	13
TOTAL	1496	100

TABLE XXXIV

EDUCATIONAL ENCOURAGEMENT RECEIVED BY RESPONDENT'S CHILDREN

Type of encouragement	Yes		No		Not indicated	
	Number	Per cent	Number	Per cent	Number	Per cent
Respondent helps children with lessons	860	57	428	29	208	14
Respondent encourages children to finish high school	1471	98	9	1	16	1
Children receive help with homework from other than respondent	571	38	722	48	203	14

In planning subsequent educational programs, the use of television and other media are factors to receive serious consideration. Therefore the survey included the types of entertainment used by the families. The data in Table XXXVI are noteworthy because eighty-six per cent of the homes have television and seventy per cent have radios. The larger total of 453 reporting no entertainment may indicate that many respondent did not understand the term "entertainment" but did understand "television" and"radios" and others.

Table XXXVII indicates educational enrichment outside the home is nil.

Before making the survey one anticipated that poverty was common among the rural people; that they had low incomes and it was believed that many heads-of-household would be willing to seek training in a skill that would likely to increase their income. Table XXXVIII presents the result of the item relating to the training that they might undertake. Again the data are confusing because 1,039 of 1,496 persons indicated no training was wanted. These data are probably somewhat correct when one considers that in Table XXV 814 did not have a job. Perhaps a figure around 900 is the size of the phantom population that is not working and may not seek training.

Table XXXIX gives the data on the number of children in the community who have attended Head Start Programs.

TABLE XXXV

RESPONDENT'S SCHOOL AGE CHILDREN WHO ARE NOT IN SCHOOL

Number of children	Respondents reporting	Total number of reported children
1	88	88
2	21	42
3	3	9
4	1	4
5	1	5
6	1	6
TOTAL	115	154

TABLE XXXVI

TYPES OF HOME ENTERTAINMENT PROVIDED
RESPONDENT'S CHILDREN

Type entertainment	Number *	Per cent
Television	1285	86
Radio	1050	70
Magazines	660	44
Books	451	30
Comics	443	30
Games	405	27
Newspapers	370	25
Other	131	8
None	453	30

* Total would be inappropriate because respondent could indicate more than one category.

TABLE XXXVII

EDUCATIONAL ENRICHMENT OUTSIDE OF THE HOME

Type enrichment	Yes		No		Not indicated	
	Number	Per cent	Number	Per cent	Number	Per cent
Children have ever visited a zoo	412	28	1047	70	37	2
Children have ever visited a museum	97	6	1360	91	39	3

TABLE XXXVIII

* TYPE OF SKILL WHICH COULD BE DEVELOPED BY TRAINING

Skill	Number of respondents	Per cent
Sewing	156	10
Building trades	94	6
Mechanic	83	6
Cooking	47	3
Nursing	33	2
Machinery	25	2
Research	10	1
Beautician	7	1
Physical therapist	2	1
Not indicated	1039	69
TOTAL	1496	100

* These data follow the question asked in #67.

TABLE XXXIX

* NUMBER OF CHILDREN IN FAMILY WHO ATTEND HEAD START PROGRAMS

Number of children	Respondents reporting	Total number of children reported
1	288	288
2	134	268
3	25	75
4	3	12
TOTAL	450	643

* These data are relevant to information in Table II for 0-5 and 6-16 age groups.

SUMMARY

The survey of rural life in Leflore County, Mississippi, was made so that problems of rural youth could be defined in behavioral terms and documented and so that these needs could be attacked more vigorously than has been done in the past. Specifically, the survey attempted to use indigenous persons to collect information about the problems and potentials of rural youth, to use this information to assist in the preparation of future instructional and research proposals, and to help mobilize the resources that are needed to support a total educational program.

To accomplish these objectives, consultants, representing both private and public institutions of higher learning and service agencies from twelve different states assisted local committees identifying concerns, translating these concerns into questionnaire items, and instructing indigenous persons on how to administer the questionnaire. All work was accomplished during the 1967-1968 calendar years and usable data was obtained from 1496 Negro respondents who were identified as the head-of-the-household.

Some of the major findings of the survey were:

1. In the majority of residences surveyed, atypical family conditions were found to exist. Approximately one home in five had a woman as the head-of-the-household.

2. The mean number of children attending school from each household was 3.3.

3. Most all of the people in rural Mississippi associate themselves with a church with one family in twelve having no affilitation .

4. More than half the houses have four rooms or less. On the basis of averages, it is expected that seven people will be living in each house and of this group, three are of school age, and one is pre-school age. Continuing this line of thought, there are approximately two persons living in each room in the whole rural area.

5. Almost half the homes in rural Mississippi have no toilet of any kind, outside or inside.

6. Almost half the first born children in rural Leflore County were born when the mother was 17 years or younger.

7. A total of 115 children of school age who were not attending any school was identified.

8. Employment patterns were confusing. Nevertheless, there are many indications that approximately half of the heads-of-households are unemployed.

9. A great majority of the houses was neither rented nor owned but simply existed as a shelter with few aids that would contribute to the welfare of the residents.

10. Approximately one third of the heads-of-household is illiterate. When the implications of these data are supplemented with the fact that there is an almost total void of reading materials in the home and that almost 90 per cent of the homes had television, practically all the communication is limited to aural information.

RECOMMENDATIONS

Some of the more general recommendations are:

1. Top priority should be given to designing an after school system that will provide facilities for children to study and to participate in some form of a recreational program. Most homes have neither the space nor an adult who can help in any type of an educational program. One alternative would be to create an after-school plant with emphasis upon individual study and community and personal health.

2. Leflore County needs six additional special education teachers and one supervisor to provide a program for the children who are of school age but who are not in school.

3. Leflore County Schools should consider developing are instructional programs that begins with aural learning because printed information in any form is almost non-existent in most of the homes throughout the county. In other words, initial instruction would be based on learning without words and without printed materials.

4. Effort should be made to acquaint and to involve local citizens in the educational programs. The use of radio and television should be explored.

5. A follow-up study should be made of the extreme cases as identified in this survey; for example, the homes having three rooms with twelve persons and no water, serving daily two meals or less prepared in a fireplace.

6. Leflore County Schools should consider establishing a system coordinating adult (parental) health and welfare programs with the school educational program.

7. The Leflore County Schools needs a pre-school or Early Childhood Education program. It should be started at once.

8. The school system needs an enlarged individualized instructional program for the in-school and out of school population.

9. The Leflore County Schools needs an area vocational program complex for the school age and adult population.

Some Educational Implications of Sociological Factors in Leflore County

By

Joseph . Garza
Professor of Sociology
Mississippi State University

Some Educational Implications of Sociological Factors in Leflore County

By

Joseph M. Garza

I. The following proposals of programs to improve the academic performance and achievement of Leflore County students are the products of (1) discussions with "known experts" (principals, teachers, and administrators of the Leflore County schools, (2) a recent survey of social and economic characteristics of Leflore County residents, and (3) previous research conducted on populations of similar characteristics. The specific proposals submitted for possible implementation are:

1. A system of pre-school training, and
2. A parent education program.

It is recognized that other areas within the existing educational structure and within the larger community are in need of improvement, but the purpose here is to suggest programs that can possibly have a more immediate affect upon students' academic performance and academic motivation. For this reason the above suggestions focus directly upon the school and the family, for it is these two institutions with which children come into direct and primary contact.

II. Pre-school Training

The need for the implementation of a system of pre-school training is strongly suggested by the following:

A. As much as one half of the first year of school is devoted to helping the child to adjust to the new and strange environment of the school. Such adjustment is, of course, necessary for satisfactory academic performance, but the effect is to delay the child's introduction

to the essential activities of the school system and to the learning of the basic educational skills. Thus, from the very beginning the child experiences a handicap, namely, late exposure to basic education.

1. A system of pre-school training could do much to alleviate, if not completely remove, this initial handicap by acting as a "stage of transition".

2. This "stage of transition" could be characterized by activities designed to acquaint the child with the environment of the total school.

B. Drop-out rates

1. Reports from teachers and school administrators and from data recently collected show that dropping out of school and excessive absenteeism are in part resulting from the need for older children to remain at home to care for younger children of pre-school age. Although it would not eliminate the problem of high absenteeism and high drop-out rates, a system of pre-school training would undermine one of the reasons for dropping out of school, or for being excessively absent.

2. Stated differently, a system of pre-school training conceivably could have a dual positive effect, first by providing the pre-school child with early exposure to the school system, and second, by relieving older siblings of the responsibility for child care. The older sibling(s) is thus placed in a situation more conducive to school attendance and academic performance.

C. General lack of cultural stimulation

1. The relation between exposure to numerous cultural stimuli and academic motivation and performance is well established. That is, children from environments characterized by heavy exposure to such things as books, magazines, newspapers, toys and games, challenging situations,

and rich conversation, perform better in school than do those who lack such experiences.

2. For the most part, families in Leflore County so not enjoy this heavy exposure to rich cultural stimuli. The economic conditions of these families undoubtedly have much to do with the existence of this "poverty of culture," but these conditions require long-range solutions. It is suggested here that a system of pre-school training could provide children with early exposure to a wealth of culture, and the impact would be direct and immediate.

D. The matricentric family structure

1. The negative effects of a matricentric family structure in a monogamous equalitarion family system permeate family reasearch in American society. More specifically, children in a mutricentric system in the United States inevitably fail to receive the kind of care and attention, and frequency of parental interaction, considered essential to the learning of appropriate role behavior.

2. Family life among many residents of Leflore County can be subsumed under the concept of "matricentric structure". And this is equivalent to saying that siblings of both sexes fail to learn the role-model of "father-husband" (or, at best they acquire a conception of the father-husband role that is in conflict with that held by the majority of Americans.)

3. There is no doubt that pre-school training can do much to expose children to appropriate and significant role models, but a move basic argument for appropriate and significant role models, but a more basic argument for its justification is that it will provide children with early, frequent, varied, and intimate social contact-conditions considered crucial to stable emotional development. And the simple fact is that the matricentric family does not seem to be able to perform these necessary

activities.

4. The matricentric family, because the father is typically absent and the mother is away from the home during most of the day, is generally unable to carry out certain socialization practices considered necessary for successful educational and occupational achievement. In addition, when the mother does return home at the end of the day she is usually too tired to devote an adequate amount of attention to childrearing. Under those conditions, the mother is unable to stress "deferred gratification", independence training, and achievement training - behaviors especially important in academic achievement.

5. Research in this area strongly suggests two things: first, these practices are directly related to achievement motivation; and second, the earlier they are stressed, the greater the chance for success (i.e., internalizing a strong need to achieve). It is suggested here that a system of pre-school training would fill a gap in the child's life by exposing him to a situation characterized by repeated stress on "deferred gratification" (delaying immediate need satisfaction in or to obtain a greater reward in the future, " achievement training" (getting the child to do things well) and "independence training")getting the child to do things on his own without asking for help). The really significant aspect about these behaviors is that they are begun as early as possible, and a system of pre-school training would be a major step in this direction.

III. Parent Education Program

The basic goal of a parent education program would be to acquaint parents with the organization and purpose of formal education and to increase the frequency of contact between educators and parents. That such a goal is necessary to the succesfful operation of the formal system of

education is manifested in the following.

A. Existing gap between aspirations and expections.

1. Mothers in Leflore County (and this is true also of populations with similar social characteristics throughout the country) generally have higher occupational and educational aspirations for their children than they have occuputional and educational expections. That is, mothers would like their children to finish high school and go into college (thus putting themselves in positions to compete more effectively for better jobs) but their assessment of social conditions (opportunities) and the gerneral poverty of their daily existence forces them to lower their hopes, to be satisfied with less.

2. The implication of this negative definition is that mothers do not encourage their children to finish school; their economic poverty actually serves to encourge them to withdraw their children from school for the benefit of contributing to the family income.

3. A program of parent education, the basic instrument being periodic visits by teachers to homes of children, would attack directly the existing gap between aspirations and expectations. The specific task would be to convince mothers of the long-range value of formal education; to stress that if her children are not encouraged to remain in school and to perform satisfactorily, they (the mothers) contribute directly to the low earning potential of their children.

4. It would also be necessary to stress to mothers, of course, that occupational opportunities are emerging for it is a safe assumption that most families in Leflore County posses a negative view of occupational opportunities.

B. Existence of a negative attitude-set toward formal education.

1. Parents generally have a vague idea of what the school does, and because of their own educational handicap they typically are unable to understand <u>on their own</u> the long-range goals of the school. The implication of this is that one is not likely to support that which one cannot, or does not, understand. Clearly, the more information parents have about the structure and operation of the school, the more likely their support will grow.

a) a concomitant of the idea immediately above (and this is a basic psychological principle) is the tendency to distrust and to avoid that which is viewed as strange and foreign, and the schools are viewed as something strange and foreign.

2. Contributing to this negative attitude-set is the obvious fact that the parents themselves have had little if any formal education and consequently can see little value in it for their own children. Indeed (and the research here is limited but highly suggestive) even if parents do value formal education this is no guarantee they will encourage their children to remain in school. This value must be accompanied by a high level of perception of opportunity (occupational).

a) Assuming that such opportunities are developing, it is the task of the school to convey this information to the parents, either on a group basis or individual basis, or both if necessary.

b) This negative attitude set is transmitted from one generation to the next and has traditionally been supported and reinforced by conditions in the larger society. It is suggested here that a parent education program aimed at distributing information about the structure and function of the schools, about the inherent value of formal education, and about expanding occupational opportunities would do much to increase parental support of formal education.